

A NOTICE TO PARENTS, GUARDIANS, and STAFF

Sidney Central School District

Lead Testing of School Drinking Water

November 2020

Safe and healthy school environments can foster healthy and successful children. To protect public health, the Public Health Law and New York State Health Department (NYS DOH) regulations require that all public schools and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) test lead levels in water from every outlet that is being used, or could potentially be used, for drinking or cooking. If lead is found at any water outlet at levels above 15 parts per billion (ppb), which is equal to 15 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), the NYS DOH requires that the school take action to reduce the exposure to lead.

What is first draw testing of school drinking water for lead?

The “on-again, off-again” nature of water use at most schools can raise lead levels in school drinking water. Water that remains in pipes overnight, over a weekend, or over vacation periods stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and, as a result, could contain higher levels of lead. This is why schools are required to collect a sample after the water has been sitting in the plumbing system for a certain period of time. This “first draw” sample is likely to show higher levels of lead for that outlet than what you would see if you sampled after using the water continuously. However, even if the first draw sample does not reflect what you would see with continuous usage, it is still important because it can identify outlets that have elevated lead levels.

What are the results of the first draw testing?

Outlets identified as exceeding the acceptable level have been taken out of operation and will remain out until remediated. The results of the required testing conducted at all sites within the District are below:

Samples Collected on 11/13/2020 & 11/16/2020				
Floor	Function / Space	Room	Fixture Type	Sample Results
01	Concession Stand	Bathroom	Sink	127ppb
01	Concession Stand	Bathroom	Sink	17.8ppb
01	ES Non-food Prep	Kitchen	Sink-not used	42.8ppb
01	MS Break-out Room	M112	Sink-not used	28.9ppb
01	HS Non-food Prep	Kitchen	Equipment-not used	764ppb
01	HS Screening	W100E	Sink-not used storage	130ppb
01	Pool Locker Room	N518A	Faucet 2-non-potable	326ppb
01	Pool Locker Room	N518A	Faucet 3 non-potable	177ppb
01	Pool Locker Room	N518A	Faucet 4 non-potable	184ppb

What is being done in response to the results?

Please be assured that both municipal and well sources of water in the District are regularly tested and meet all safety standards. Possible causes for not meeting the acceptable level may include:

- Sinks & faucets not being used due to lack of need
- Older fixtures and piping and/or solder
- Contaminated aerator
- Contaminated water filters

Outlets that tested with lead levels above the action level (15ppb) were removed from service, unless an outlet is a sink faucet needed for handwashing. In that case, a sign was posted at the outlet indicating that the sink is not to be used for drinking. Outlets that tested below the action level remain in service with no restrictions.

What are the health effects of lead?

Lead is a metal that can harm children and adults when it gets into their bodies. Lead is a known neurotoxin, particularly harmful to the developing brain and nervous system of children under 6 years old. Lead can harm a young child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. Lead exposure during pregnancy may contribute to low birth weight and developmental delays in infants. There are many sources of lead exposure in the environment, and it is important to reduce all lead exposures as much as possible. Water testing helps identify and correct possible sources of lead that contribute to exposure from drinking water.

What are the other sources of lead exposure?

Lead is a metal that has been used for centuries for many purposes, resulting in widespread distribution in the environment. Major sources of lead exposure include lead-based paint in older housing, and lead that built up over decades in soil and dust due to historical use of lead in gasoline, paint, and manufacturing. Lead can also be found in a number of consumer products, including certain types of pottery, pewter, brass fixtures, foods, plumbing materials, and cosmetics. Lead seldom occurs naturally in water supplies but drinking water could become a possible source of lead exposure if the building's plumbing contains lead. The primary source of lead exposure for most children with elevated blood-lead levels is lead-based paint.

Should your child be tested for lead?

The risk to an individual child from past exposure to elevated lead in drinking water depends on many factors, including but not limited to, a child's age, weight, amount of water consumed, and the amount of lead in the water. Children may also be exposed to other significant sources of lead including paint, soil and dust. Since blood lead testing is the only way to determine a child's blood lead level, parents should discuss their child's health history with their child's physician to determine if blood lead testing is appropriate. Pregnant women or women of childbearing age should also consider discussing this matter with their physician.

School safety is paramount to the mission of the Sidney Central School District and we are committed to providing a safe, secure learning environment. A copy of our test results are available on our website at www.sidneycsd.org, along with the required Lead Remediation Plan. Should you have questions, please contact the District Office at 607-561-7700.

Sincerely,

Eben M. Bullock
Superintendent of Schools